UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION

Official Records

FIFTH COMMITTEE
54th meeting
held on
Monday, 8 March 1993
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 54th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. DINU (Romania)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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93-80262 6655S (E)

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.5/47/SR.54
4 August 1993

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

The meeting was called to order at 10.50 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 153: FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS OPERATION IN MOZAMBIQUE (A/47/881/Add.1 and 896)

1. The CHAIRMAN recalled that the General Assembly had decided, on the proposal of the Secretary-General, to include in the agenda of its forty-seventh session an additional item entitled "Financing of the United Nations Operation in Mozambique" and to allocate it to the Fifth Committee as agenda item 153. In that connection, he drew attention to the report of the Secretary-General (A/47/881/Add.1) and the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/47/896), which were before the Committee.

2. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing document A/47/896, said that the Security Council, by its resolution 797 (1992) of 16 December 1992, had decided to establish the United Nations Operation in Mozambique (ONUMOZ) for a period until 31 October 1993. Document A/47/881/Add.1 contained proposals for the financing of ONUMOZ. As explained in the reports submitted to the Security Council by the Secretary-General, particularly document S/24892, the overall framework and operational plan for ONUMOZ had four components - political, military, electoral and humanitarian. The functions to be carried out in accordance with those four aspects were summarized in paragraph 13 of the Secretary-General's report.

3. For the military component, the Secretary-General was requesting funds to cover 354 military observers and 6,625 troops, including five infantry battalions. For the civilian component, the Secretary-General estimated that the United Nations would require 861 civilians. In addition, for the three-week period during the election phase, 1,200 international observers and 1,200 local staff would be required. The financial requirement for the period 15 October 1992 to 31 October 1993 had been estimated at $264,090,700 gross or $259,712,000 net.

4. As indicated in paragraph 8 of its report, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions had been ready to consider the estimates in great detail; it had, however, been informed by representatives of the Secretary-General that a number of elements of the operational plan were out of date. The representatives of the Secretary-General had also indicated that by the time the United Nations established itself in Mozambique, as required by the General Peace Agreement which had entered into force on 15 October 1992, the implementation of the various schedules, as provided for in the Agreement, would also be delayed. It was in recognition of the time constraint placed on the United Nations by the Agreement that the Security Council, in paragraph 4 of its resolution 797 (1992), had invited the Secretary-General to consult closely with all the parties on a precise timing of and preparations for the presidential and legislative elections as well as

on the precise timetable for the implementation of the other major aspects of the Agreement and to report back to the Council on that as soon as possible, and in any event not later than 31 March 1993.

5. After careful consideration of the best manner in which to proceed and on the basis of the additional information provided by the representatives of the Secretary-General, the Advisory Committee had decided to submit an interim recommendation to the General Assembly. The rationale for the procedure adopted by the Advisory Committee was explained in paragraph 12 of document A/47/896. The Advisory Committee's proposals should also enable the United Nations to commence the various operations of ONUMOZ and, in particular, those relating to the military, political and humanitarian aspects, pending the submission and consideration of the report requested by the Security Council.

6. As stated in paragraph 11 of its report, the Advisory Committee had requested, and had subsequently received from representatives of the Secretary-General information on cost estimates for the period until 30 June 1993, taking into account delays in the phasing-in of military and civilian personnel. Accordingly, the Advisory Committee was recommending that an amount of $140 million should be appropriated and assessed for the period 15 October 1992 to 30 June 1993.

7. In that connection, he drew the attention of all concerned, especially the Secretariat, to paragraphs 13 to 17 of the Advisory Committee's report. Those paragraphs contained a number of requests, including the request that a report should be submitted by the Secretary-General to the Advisory Committee by 1 July 1993 so as to enable the Advisory Committee to submit detailed recommendations on the total financing of ONUMOZ. The Advisory Committee hoped that that report would be submitted in a timely manner. In paragraph 16, the Advisory Committee commented on the problem of delays in the submission of the ONUMOZ financing report. The Advisory Committee trusted that that problem would be addressed seriously by all concerned units of the Secretariat.

8. Mr. AFONSO (Mozambique) said that the signing at Rome on 4 October 1992 of the General Peace Agreement for Mozambique had been the culmination of two years of negotiations aimed at settling the conflict which had ravaged the country for 17 years. The Agreement had put an end to the wave of violence and had ushered in a new era of peace, harmony and understanding among all Mozambicans. His delegation appealed for greater efforts at all levels to ensure the immediate, effective and full implementation of the Agreement, which would be the first step towards the promotion of development, democracy and national reconciliation in the country.

9. During the past five months, progress had been made in the implementation of the Agreement. All the institutional mechanisms envisaged by the Agreement were now in place. Military observers were arriving in Mozambique and had commenced their activities. A donors' conference for Mozambique had been held

(Mr. Afonso, Mozambique)

in Rome with encouraging results, including the decision to establish a United Nations trust fund for humanitarian assistance to Mozambique.

10. Despite those important developments, his delegation believed that the effective deployment of an adequate number of United Nations peace-keeping forces in the country was urgently required. The spirit of goodwill and cooperation so far displayed by all parties, in accordance with the noble goals outlined in the Agreement, could not be undermined at such a critical juncture by the lack of resolute action on the part of the international community and, in particular, the United Nations. Although the cease-fire had held for nearly six months without a meaningful United Nations presence on the ground, thus testifying to the parties' commitment to abide by the provisions of the Agreement, it was necessary to allocate the resources required to make the peace process irreversible. In addition to the military dimension, the electoral, humanitarian and other aspects of ONUMOZ also required adequate resources.

11. In the interests of greater efficiency and cost-effectiveness, his delegation welcomed the Advisory Committee's recommendation in paragraph 13 of its report that the Secretariat should make every reasonable effort to acquire services, resources and materials from local and area sources. Lastly, it was to be hoped that the Fifth Committee would adopt by consensus the recommendation contained in paragraph 14 of the Advisory Committee's report.

12. Ms. RIGGELSEN (Denmark), speaking on behalf of the States members of the European Community, said that those countries greatly regretted the time which had elapsed between the Security Council's establishment of ONUMOZ and the submission of the Secretariat's budget proposal. Two months was too long a period, especially when it was a question of an operation urgently called for by all parties concerned.

13. The unacceptable delays in the planning phase of the operation again highlighted the need for better coordination and a clearer command structure within the Secretariat. The European Community reaffirmed its view that the structure of the peace-keeping units within the Secretariat should be reviewed so as to enable the Secretariat to cope with the increasing number of peace-keeping operations and their growing complexity. Contrary to what was sometimes alleged, the General Assembly had taken prompt action in the recent past on the financing of peace-keeping operations. The States on whose behalf she spoke could not agree that the delays in the approval of budgets for peace-keeping operations established by the Security Council were attributable to the Assembly.

14. The European Community was seriously concerned at the lack of substance in document A/47/881/Add.1. A budget should be a natural reflection of an operational plan. Despite frequent criticisms by the Advisory Committee of the poor quality of the information provided in financing proposals for peace-keeping operations, their timeliness and content had not yet improved.

(Ms. Riggelsen, Denmark)

15. Earlier in the session, the European Community had stated in the Fifth Committee that, in view of the very substantial sums of money involved, the Committee should devote more time in the future to the consideration of budget estimates for peace-keeping operations. During the current resumed session, however, less than four days would be allocated to the consideration of four accounts, which was an unreasonably short period.

16. The draft resolutions which were currently before the Fifth Committee were all based on the principle of collective responsibility. In accordance with Article 17 of the Charter of the United Nations, the costs of peace-keeping operations were expenses of the Organization, to be borne by Member States. The financing of the Bosnia and Herzegovina command of the United Nations Protection Force in Yugoslavia (UNPROFOR), however, constituted a regrettable exception to that rule, one which the Community hoped would be remedied shortly. The States members of the European Community would appreciate information concerning the actions already taken and envisaged by the Secretary-General to ensure more effective planning of peace-keeping operations, the improvement of budgetary information and presentation, and a review of current procedures to enable the proper and timely launching of such missions in a cost-effective and efficient manner, as recommended by the Advisory Committee.

17. Mr. SENGWE (Zimbabwe) welcomed the General Peace Agreement for Mozambique, which would end a conflict that had affected the entire southern African region, including Zimbabwe. He also welcomed the appointment by the Secretary-General, pursuant to Security Council resolution 782 (1992), of an interim Special Representative. Despite enormous odds, the interim Special Representative had managed to work with both the Government of Mozambique and RENAMO in implementing the Agreement and the fact that the cease-fire was still holding, although ONUMOZ had not yet been fully deployed, was a tribute to the parties to the conflict, who were cooperating to ensure the restoration of peace in that war-ravaged country.

18. He welcomed the comprehensive report of the Secretary-General (A/47/881/Add.1), which spelt out the financial implications of deploying ONUMOZ. The magnitude and complexity of the responsibilities entrusted to the Organization under the Agreement required the involvement of the international community as a whole. A massive injection of humanitarian assistance would be needed for the resettlement of returnees and for reconstruction.

19. Zimbabwe was committed to seeing the peace process in Mozambique succeed and was therefore concerned about the Organization's delay in sending troops, despite the authorization of the Security Council. His delegation hoped that the operation would be shortly consolidated and, in that connection, supported the recommendation of the Advisory Committee that the General Assembly should appropriate and assess for ONUMOZ a lump sum of $140 million to ensure the rapid deployment of the operation. The Advisory Committee's report also stressed the importance of reducing costs, especially at a time when the

(Mr. Sengwe, Zimbabwe)

Organization's resources were being stretched to the limit by its numerous peace-keeping operations all over the world. It should be emphasized, however, that there was no price tag on peace. The situation in Mozambique was a difficult one which required an exceptional response.

20. Finally, he noted the Advisory Committee's view that every reasonable effort should be made by the Secretariat to acquire services, resources and materials from local and area sources. His delegation would welcome information from the Secretariat concerning the action taken to save the Organization's meagre resources in the deployment of United Nations operations in general and of ONUMOZ in particular.

21. Mr. BAHADIAN (Brazil) said that, after many years of an unspeakably violent war and the worst drought in many decades, the people of Mozambique were finally starting to enjoy the peace they so much deserved. The approach outlined by the Secretary-General in his report (S/24642) and endorsed by the Security Council in its resolution 797 (1992) that the electoral process should go hand in hand with the restriction of the warring factions to designated bases and their disarmament was likely to avert the difficulties which other peace processes had encountered. Indeed the peace-keeping operation in Mozambique enjoyed unusually good prospects for success. The cease-fire had been holding since October 1992, even though the bulk of the military component of ONUMOZ was yet to be deployed. The end of the drought would also help to ease the humanitarian plight of the population. He wished to caution, however, against the possibility of Mozambique being victimized by its success. The scarce resources of the Organization were also needed in other trouble spots. Nevertheless, peace was priceless, particularly since the Mozambican parties had consistently shown their readiness to honour their commitments.

22. The report of ACABQ provided the Committee with updated information on the deployment of ONUMOZ. Regrettably, the report of the Secretary-General on the operational plan of ONUMOZ had been overtaken by recent developments. ACABQ and the General Assembly were thus being called upon to act on an important matter without having all the necessary information at their disposal. For that reason, the Advisory Committee's recommendation that the General Assembly, at the current stage, should appropriate and assess for ONUMOZ a lump sum of $140 million in order to ensure the rapid deployment of the operation was a wise one which offered a way out of a very complex situation. His delegation concurred with the recommendation of ACABQ on the understanding that the Secretariat might return to the General Assembly if the lump sum amount proved insufficient to meet the high start-up and maintenance costs of the operation. It also concurred with the Advisory Committee's request to the Secretariat that the revised and detailed cost estimates for the entire mandate period of ONUMOZ should be made available by 1 July 1993.

23. Mr. FRANCIS (Australia), speaking also on behalf of Canada and New Zealand, said that he fully supported the recommendation of ACABQ that a lump sum of $140 million should be appropriated for ONUMOZ for the period

(Mr. Francis, Australia)

15 October 1992 to 30 June 1993 to allow the Secretariat additional time to submit detailed cost estimates for the full mandate period. ACABQ had responded with commendable flexibility to an urgent and difficult situation. The failure on the part of the Secretariat to submit a detailed funding request prompted justifiable criticism from ACABQ on the Secretariat's procedures for the planning and implementation of peace-keeping operations.

24. While he welcomed its establishment, the new Department of Peace-keeping Operations did not have sufficient resources to proactively plan new peace-keeping missions and to manage and coordinate existing ones. In his view, that was the most pressing problem as well as the root cause of many others. It was no surprise, therefore, to read in the recent report of the outgoing head of the Department of Administration and Management that the ranks of those engaged in peace-keeping in the Secretariat needed to be dramatically increased and that a significant overhaul of infrastructure was needed. The report noted that the United Nations was still doing its peace-keeping as though it were business as usual.

25. The need for additional resources in the area of peace-keeping should not, however, be addressed in an ad hoc manner, as was currently the case. The operational aspects of United Nations peace-keeping needed a comprehensive and systematic review and the functions of the Department of Peace-keeping Operations and the Field Operations Division needed to be more clearly defined. After that was done, the required resources should be quantified and allocated.

26. The Secretary-General must ensure that peace-keeping operations were planned and implemented in a timely and effective manner. In that regard, it might be helpful for the Committee to have the opportunity to examine the report of the review team which had been asked by the previous Secretary-General to conduct a review of the planning and management of peace-keeping operations and other similar missions.

27. He noted that some additional information had been made available to ACABQ during its consideration of the item of the financing of ONUMOZ. He would welcome an explanation from the Secretariat as to when that additional data would be made available to the Committee to permit it quickly to advance in its own consideration of the item.

28. With regard to the start-up funding for ONUMOZ, he was pleased to note that $9.5 million from the peace-keeping reserve fund had been earmarked for start-up costs. He also noted, however, that $32.9 million had been loaned to ongoing peace-keeping operations. He understood, further, that since the preparation of the report, additional sums had been loaned to ongoing peace-keeping operations and that the uncommitted or unspent balance in the reserve fund was currently only $5.6 million. He would appreciate an updated report from the Secretariat on exactly how much was currently on loan to ongoing operations, what were those operations, how much of the balance was committed and to which operations. Such loans could seriously undermine the

(Mr. Francis, Australia)

central purpose of the fund, which was intended as a special-purpose account for financing the start-up of new operations. At a time when the Organization was about to launch in Somalia one of its largest operations, the peace-keeping reserve fund had only $5.6 million to meet start-up costs. It would be interesting to hear how the Secretariat proposed to deal with the start-up costs for that operation. He would be particularly discouraged if the loans made from the peace-keeping reserve fund served to discourage prompt payment of assessments to individual peace-keeping accounts.

29. The current state of the peace-keeping reserve fund did more than illustrate that it was not being used for the priority activity for which it was intended. It also demonstrated that the establishment of the fund was no more than a first, albeit important, step in the continuing process of review and reform of peace-keeping financing.

30. Ms. ROEDSMOEN (Norway), speaking also on behalf of Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Sweden, said that the Nordic countries firmly supported the peace-keeping operations of the United Nations, including the new operation in Mozambique. They therefore supported the recommendation of ACABQ that a lump sum of $140 million should be appropriated for ONUMOZ for the period 15 October 1992 to 30 June 1993.

31. The Nordic countries also shared the concern expressed by ACABQ over the unsatisfactory budget procedures of the operation. Member States were being called upon to contribute ever-increasing amounts to peace-keeping operations and they should therefore be assured tht the financial requirements were fully justified. A lump sum approach, without detailed consideration by the appropriate advisory bodies, was not a satisfactory procedure for Member States.

32. She was fully aware of the difficulties of presenting realistic budget estimates for peace-keeping operations. Indeed, the urgency, unpredictability and growing complexity of the operations made budgeting and initial planning challenging tasks. Nevertheless, the Nordic countries supported the view of the Advisory Committee that the Secretariat's procedures for the planning and implementation of peace-keeping operations should be improved and called upon the Secretary-General to take urgent measures for better coordination, both within the Secretariat and system-wide. The Secretary-General should also ensure more effective planning of peace-keeping operations and review the current procedures to enable the proper and timely launching of such missions in a cost-effective and efficient manner.

33. Ms. ROTHEISER (Austria) said that her delegation attached great importance to the effective implementation of the mandate of ONUMOZ, which must be done on a sound financial basis. She therefore regretted the delay in planning for the operation and the lack of sufficient information on the question of its funding. The cost estimates provided by the Secretary-General did not permit members to assess fully the financial needs of the operation

(Ms. Rotheiser, Austria)

and it would therefore be helpful if additional information were provided to the Committee.

34. Her delegation supported the Advisory Committee's recommendations contained in paragraph 16 of its report (A/47/896) as well as its recommendation that the General Assembly should appropriate for ONUMOZ a lump sum of $140 million for the period 15 October 1992 to 30 June 1993. Finally, it looked forward to the revised and detailed cost estimates for ONUMOZ for the entire mandate period, which the Secretary-General was requested to submit by 1 July 1993.

35. Mr. SY (Senegal) said that his country welcomed the historic signing of the General Peace Agreement for Mozambique, which gave some hope at last to the long-suffering people of that country. The situation in Mozambique remained critical, however, and any delay in the start-up of the peace-keeping operation would have serious consequences.

36. The report of the Advisory Committee, which called attention to the delays in the launching of the operation, was a responsible one. Nevertheless, in recommending the appropriation of a lump sum of $140 million to ensure the rapid deployment of the operation, while awaiting the revised and detailed cost estimates, ACABQ had demonstrated commendable flexibility. His delegation supported the Advisory Committee's position that the recommended appropriation was an exceptional response to an urgent and difficult situation and should not be considered a precedent for future operations.

37. The international community must now assist the people of Mozambique in rebuilding their country and not allow them to become victims of their own success in adhering to the Peace Agreement signed in October 1992. He therefore appealed to the Secretary-General to submit the revised and detailed cost estimates for ONUMOZ for the entire mandate period by 1 July 1993, as requested by the Advisory Committee. For its part, the Committee must leave no stone unturned to reach a consensus on the launching of the operation.

38. Ms. RIGGELSEN (Denmark) asked whether there were any annexes to the budget of ONUMOZ and, if so, if they could be made available to the Committee.

39. Mr. INOMATA (Japan) said that his delegation, too, regretted the paucity of the information contained in the report of the Secretary-General (A/47/881/Add.1). The pending review by ACABQ of the question of the format of budgets for peace-keeping operations should not prevent the Secretariat from submitting its revised and detailed cost estimates, as requested by ACABQ. During consideration of cost estimates for other peace-keeping operations, including UNAVEM, ONUSAL and UNTAG, the Fifth Committee had repeatedly requested the Secretary-General to improve the format of the respective budgets. He hoped that the Committee's recommendations would be implemented without awaiting the outcome of the discussions in ACABQ on the matter.

(Mr. Inomata, Japan)

40. In paragraph 11 of its report on the financing of ONUMOZ (A/47/896), ACABQ indicated that it had requested information on cost estimates for the period until 30 June 1993. That information was an important element in helping the Committee to decide on the appropriateness of the lump sum of $140 million and could also help to restore confidence in the budgetary process currently under way. The Fifth Committee could not give carte blanche to the Secretariat and his delegation wished to join the Advisory Committee in stressing that the recommended appropriation was an exceptional response to an urgent and difficult situation and that it should not be considered a precedent for future operations.

41. Mr. BAUDOT (Controller), replying to the question asked by the representative of Denmark, said that the annexes to the ONUMOZ budget would shortly be made available to the Fifth Committee in one of the working languages of the Organization.

42. Mr. INOMATA (Japan) said that he had also the additional information submitted to the Advisory Committee that was referred to in paragraph 12 of the Secretary-General's report on ONUMOZ (A/47/881/Add.1).

43. Mr. BAUDOT (Controller) said that it would be a departure from normal practice to provide the Committee with the information in question. If information was requested in the course of the informal consultations on ONUMOZ, the Secretariat would, as far as possible, provide it. The Committee could then revert to the question in the context of its overall consideration of the question of the financing of peace-keeping operations.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

44. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the Committee's programme of work for 8 to 12 March 1993, which had been circulated on 5 March 1993 at the informal consultations on the programme of work for the resumed session. He understood that the Working Group had informally agreed to the tentative programme of work for the current week.

45. Mr. COHEN (United States of America) said that it was imperative for the Fifth Committee to begin its consideration of the revised budget estimates no later than 29 March 1983. In view of the difficulties relating to that item, the Fifth Committee should begin its discussions prior to the Advisory Committee's consideration of the matter.

46. Ms. RIGGELSEN (Denmark) said that in the informal consultations and at the current meeting her delegation had requested a formal debate on item 124 and had raised a number of specific questions about peace-keeping operations; she wondered whether item 124 could also be taken up during the current week.

47. Mr. FRANCIS (Australia) said that in the light of the Advisory Committee's report on ONUMOZ, a debate on item 124 would be very timely and his delegation would be happy to participate in it.

48. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee was to hold informal consultations on item 124 on the afternoon of 11 March 1993, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 47/218, section II. He would prefer to keep that meeting so as to comply with the resolution. Item 124 could be considered on the morning of 12 March as the third item of business. Item 147 could then be taken up on the afternoon of 31 March as the third item: that would give the Secretariat time to respond to the questions of delegations.

49. Mr. DUHALT (Mexico) said the delegations would need background documentation if there was to be a formal debate on items 124 and 147.

50. Mr. BOIN (France) said that if a formal debate was held on item 124, informal consultations would also be needed, and it might be necessary to prepare an additional draft resolution.

51. Mr. RAE (India) said that the suggestion that there should be a formal debate on item 124 was very important, but would also involve a great deal of preparation, and adequate documentation would be needed. He wondered whether it would be possible to accommodate such a substantive issue at the resumed session.

52. Mr. LADJOUZI (Algeria) said that his delegation fully supported the request made by the representative of Denmark. The Committee needed to consider the substantive difficulties and try to find solutions. Like the representative of India, he wondered whether it would be possible to hold a formal debate during the resumed session or whether it would be necessary to have another session in order to consider the matter.

53. Mr. FONTAINE (Cuba) said that there was no doubt about the importance of item 124. Some of the questions that had been raised went beyond administrative and financial matters and involved political issues. It would therefore be inappropriate to rush to take a decision on the matter. The Committee should first ascertain the views of the Secretariat and reach agreement on what type of information was needed, and when and where it should be discussed. More time was needed to consider those aspects.

54. Mr. FRANCIS (Australia) said that the Committee should not speculate on whether the Secretariat would be able to provide information by 12 March, but should ask whether it would be possible.

55. Mr. SY (Senegal) said that all delegations were entitled to participate in any substantive debate on the item, and for that they needed to be prepared and to have the basic documentation. If the Committee needed the documentation, it should be able to request it.

56. Mr. INOMATA (Japan) noted that in General Assembly resolution 47/218, the Secretary-General was invited to continue the strengthening and reform of the Secretariat units dealing with peace-keeping operations. While the Secretariat was not obliged to provide a report, delegations were free to raise any issue of concern to them. In that connection, the Committee should

(Mr. Inomata, Japan)

invite the Director-General for Development and International Economic Cooperation to provide the briefing on restructuring which was to have been given at the end of February but had been postponed because of the absence of documentation on the revised programme budget.

57. Mr. BAUDOT (Controller) said that item 124 was a very complex issue which had ramifications affecting the United Nations as a whole. The questions raised by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee and the comments of delegations had related to the process of preparing the budget for peace-keeping operations. It would not be possible for the Secretariat to provide a written report on that question at the resumed session, or to provide an oral response to the questions raised by the representative of Denmark, even if they were limited to aspects relating to the Fifth Committee. However, if the Committee decided to consider item 124 at a formal or informal meeting during the resumed session, the Secretariat would be available to reply to questions as fully as possible and to prepare for a formal debate at a later date.

58. The CHAIRMAN said that inclusion of agenda item 124 in the formal meeting on 12 March would allow delegations to raise formally issues of concern in connection with the financing of peace-keeping operations, to which the Secretariat could then respond in preparation for a subsequent formal debate. Regarding the tentative work programme for the second part of the Committee's resumed session, it might be preferable to wait until the end of the first part, on 12 March, to assess where matters stood.

59. Mr. BIDNY (Russian Federation) said that it might suffice to deal with the question of the financing of peace-keeping operations in the informal consultations on 11 March, at which time questions could be put to the Secretariat for a response. A formal meeting could then be held later.

60. Mr. FONTAINE (Cuba) wondered whether item 124 had been formally concluded in December.

61. The CHAIRMAN noted that the General Assembly, in its resolution 47/218, had requested the convening of an open-ended working group of the Fifth Committee during the forty-seventh session to examine the placement of Member States into the groups for the apportionment of peace-keeping expenses. That matter would be dealt with in the informal consultations on 11 March. His suggestion that item 124 should also be dealt with in a formal meeting the next day was in response to the concerns of Member States. Nevertheless, he was open to other ways of proceeding.

62. Mr. FONTAINE (Cuba) said that the mandate of the open-ended working group was quite specific, and did not embrace any issues other than the placement of Member States into groups. If the Committee had not concluded its consideration of item 124 a debate could of course be held, but his delegation did not think it appropriate to act on the European Community proposal for the time being.

63. Ms. SHENWICK (United States of America) said that her delegation would see a substantive problem if there was any departure in terms of the allocation of Member States to groups from the position adopted at the most recent formal meeting of the Committee on the matter. With regard to the tentative programme of work, her delegation wished the Committee to consider the questions of the terms of office of United Nations officials and of a code of conduct for such officials.

64. Mr. PENEV (Bulgaria) noted that General Assembly decision 47/467 stated that item 124 should be retained on the agenda of the forty-seventh session.

65. Mr. LADJOUZI (Algeria) agreed that the item was still open and that the open-ended working group had a very specific mandate. The proposal made by the States members of the European Community seemed much broader. If the Committee followed the Chairman's suggestion it would allow time to determine the best way of proceeding.

66. Mr. DUHALT (Mexico) said that the only outstanding issue under agenda item 124 was the grouping of Member States. It seemed now that an effort was being made to reopen issues already settled. If the whole question was reopened without a clear view of the aims and without the relevant documentation confusion would inevitably arise. The question raised by the European Community could be answered by a representative of the Secretary-General without reopening the whole issue.

67. Mr. DAMICO (Brazil) agreed that for the Committee to hold a detailed debate on the financing of peace-keeping operations would require appropriate documentation, as well as input by the Advisory Committee.

68. Mr. SPAANS (Netherlands) said that the item was still open, but could in any event have been reopened had that not been the case. His delegation supported the Chairman's suggestion regarding how the Committee might proceed. With respect to the second part of the Committee's resumed session, the document on the revised estimates had only just been made available and his delegation would require some time to consider the important issues involved.

69. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee would add agenda item 147 to the items to be considered at the formal meeting on Wednesday, 10 March, and would decide then how to proceed with its consideration of item 124.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.